

## **AESTHETICS OF RESISTANCE AND WOMEN IN KASHMIR**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The fellowship titled 'the Aesthetic of Resistance and Women in Kashmir' is an attempt to understand the contemporary changes that are taking in the lives of women in Kashmir and how these changes are at the center of greater changes that are taking place worldwide. The research also sought to get at the factors that make these changes possible. A consistent thesis that that the research brought was the cultural space that is available to women in Kashmir especially because of the presence of women cultural figures that are a central to the ethos of Kashmir. These are the figures that researcher engaged with via the medium of their poetry and the ultimate end of this exercise was the demonstration of cultural spaces of liminality and dissent that are an integral part of the cultural space.

**KEYWORDS:** Women Cultural, Cultural Space, Women in Kashmir

### **INTRODUCTION**

Two distinct ideologies have informed the place of women in society in the last few decades, one tradition holds that women and men are basically alike and equal in all important respects. Therefore they should have the same rights, privileges and opportunities. A second holds that women and men are essentially unlike each other. Therefore women and men should be assigned different rights roles and responsibilities. These two positions have all along in the early 1960's been at the center of contention for the early feminist movements. Within this the central problematic was the way in which the differences between men and women were characterized. Women had characteristics that were associated with 'nature', because of their biological makeup while as men were free from these biological limitations and therefore their characteristics were characterized as 'cultural'. From this spring's the division of the traditional, patriarchal roles for men and women. Where women are caregiver and nurturers for the family and the men are responsible for going out in the world and making accomplishments in 'affairs of the world' as opposed to the family.

This distinction of roles and responsibilities was largely a result of patriarchal relations in much of the pre modern period and in the modern period as well which was characterized by the enlightenment project. The faith that we can find a neutral viewpoint from which to gather objective facts and scientific truths about the world. This stance of objectivity and neutrality came under much criticism from all quarters especially from the feminist one which characterized the enlightenment project in great part as a mistaken belief of a white male elitist vision of the world. This worldview was transported along with the colonial project to other territories and colonies and was thus made a part of the vision of other elites and possibly working classes in other parts of the world. All other points of view were deemed unscientific and irrational and associated with the idea of the either the barbarian or the native.

## CONCLUSIONS

Speaking of the discourses of local cultural figures and those elaborated elsewhere are in the process of interacting with each other and in the process a new variety of discourse is in the offing that creates cultural, economic and creative possibilities for women in this time as well making for a rootedness in their own space and time.

This is what constitutes the aesthetic of the resistance that women in Kashmir are exploring increasingly. It is a reorientation of the self brought about by the accommodation of diverse forces. Contemporary global trends and changes on one hand and the ethos of an age old cultural tradition on the other. In this manner the dichotomy that is usually posited between *modernity* and *tradition* as contrary categories is something that is made the subject of interrogation and inquiry in a way that realizes and offers the possibilities of alternate practices and discourses that have the potential to generate social and civil movements that are humanistic and egalitarian much in the same way the those of Lalla Ded and Nurudin were in their own times.

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